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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus

I. Introduction

1. The present report on the United Nations operation in Cyprus covers developments from 21 May to 20 November and brings up to date, since the issuance of my report (S/2011/332) on 31 May 2011, the record of activities carried out by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) pursuant to Security Council resolution 186 (1964) and subsequent Council resolutions, most recently resolution 1986 (2011). Following my assessment report dated 8 August 2011 on the status of the negotiations in Cyprus (S/2011/498), my Special Adviser, Alexander Downer, briefed the Security Council on 7 September and 4 November on the state of play in the settlement negotiations.

2. As at 31 October, the strength of the military component stood at 856 for all ranks and the strength of the police component stood at 66 (see annex).

II. Mission of good offices

3. Since July 2011, some progress has been made in reaching convergence on core issues. When I met with the Greek Cypriot leader, Demetris Christofias, and the Turkish Cypriot leader, Derviş Eroğlu, on 7 July in Geneva, they agreed to an intensified phase and an enhanced United Nations role. Since July, the leaders have intensified their exchanges, meeting a total of 19 times, and focused on core issues. During that period, considerable advances were made in the areas of the economy, European Union matters and internal aspects of security, while much less progress was made on property, territory and citizenship matters.

4. I invited both leaders to join me in Greentree, New York, on 30 and 31 October, to assess the results of the negotiations since the July meeting and to determine how close the sides were to reaching a solution. During that meeting, the sides concentrated their discussions on outstanding core issues in the negotiations, in particular in the areas of governance and power-sharing, property, territory and citizenship. At Greentree, some encouraging progress was made, but much remains to be done to reach full convergence on those issues. Both leaders affirmed to me their belief that a settlement is possible and within reach. Their stated conviction has led me to ask the leaders to meet again in a similar format in Greentree in January 2012. It is my expectation that all internal aspects of a settlement will have been

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resolved by then so that we can move to a multilateral conference shortly thereafter. I will submit a separate report to the Security Council on my mission of good offices after my next meeting with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders in January 2012.

III. Activities of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

5. UNFICYP aims first and foremost to prevent a recurrence of fighting, and to contribute to the maintenance of law and order and a return to normal conditions. Its mandate requires reconciling, as far as possible, security considerations and the maintenance of the military status quo while allowing Cypriots who live and work in the buffer zone to pursue civilian activities and enjoy full and productive lives. Such an approach, when successful, builds confidence between the communities, and contributes to the overall United Nations effort in support of the peace process.

A. Prevention of a recurrence of fighting and the maintenance of the military status quo

6. UNFICYP has continued to maintain the integrity and stability of the buffer zone during the reporting period. There has been a decrease in the total number of military violations committed in the buffer zone during the reporting period. Cooperation between UNFICYP and the two opposing forces remains good, reflecting a positive working relationship with the respective chains of command.

7. The opposing forces refrained from conducting major exercises during the reporting period. In line with practice since 2008, both the National Guard and the Turkish Forces announced the cancellation of their annual exercises, "Nikiforos" and "Toros", respectively. At the same time, occasional low-level activities by the opposing forces continued, such as the ongoing illumination by the Turkish Forces of the buffer zone around the Kokkina/Erenköy pocket and also as a result of ill-discipline where the opposing forces are deployed in close proximity to each other.

8. The mission has continued to seek to further reduce tension and violations in the buffer zone through the implementation of military confidence-building measures, such as the unmanning and/or closing of observation posts in areas where opposing forces are in close proximity to each other. There has, however, been no progress on such measures during the reporting period. While the National Guard has, in the past, worked with UNFICYP on assessing the proposals, concrete steps on the part of the Turkish Forces/Turkish Cypriot Security Forces are still expected.

9. Challenges to the authority of UNFICYP in the buffer zone by the civilian population are a growing preoccupation for the mission. In particular, unauthorized farming and hunting activities, including discharge of weapons, close to the opposing forces and United Nations patrols, risk compromising the stability of the buffer zone. Responding to and preventing these activities in the buffer zone has increasingly absorbed the effort of the military component of UNFICYP during the reporting period. UNFICYP has worked closely with the authorities of both sides to resolve such issues.

10. Previously reported military positions established by the two opposing forces in the Dherinia area that violate the status quo remain in place. The Turkish Forces

retain the checkpoint in the Louroujina pocket; they also continue to conduct regular inspections of the liaison post at Strovilia which is repeatedly overmanned in violation of the military status quo. The United Nations holds the Government of Turkey responsible for the status quo in Varosha.

11. On 11 July, an explosion occurred at the Evangelos Florakis naval base in Zygi in southern Cyprus, which resulted in 13 deaths, including the commander of the naval base, and many injured. It caused extensive damage to the largest power plant on the island, causing widespread power shortages. In the aftermath of the tragedy, the Turkish Cypriot authorities offered to supply electricity across the buffer zone to help to cover the shortfall which resulted from the damage to the power plant. This offer was accepted, leading to an agreement between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Chambers of Commerce and transmission of electricity to the south from mid-July.

12. During the reporting period, there has been an increase in tension in connection with developments around the island. In September, exploratory drilling for hydrocarbons began off the southern coast of the island in the exclusive economic zone of Cyprus. This was strongly opposed by the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkey, which considered that such actions prejudged the rights of the Turkish Cypriot community in the exploitation of natural resources on and around the island.

B. Demining

13. During the reporting period, the sides continued to withhold access to the four remaining mined areas in the buffer zone, namely, one located south of Varosha under the control of the Turkish Forces and three in the Louroujina pocket under the control of the National Guard. At the same time, no agreement has been reached with the Turkish Forces or the National Guard to extend demining to areas outside the buffer zone. Until agreement is reached on access to the remaining minefields in the buffer zone or extension of demining to areas outside the buffer zone, the mine-clearance operation will have to remain suspended.

C. Restoration of normal conditions and humanitarian functions

14. Civilian activities in the buffer zone, including farming, housing construction and commercial ventures benefiting the two communities, have continued steadily during the reporting period. UNFICYP has also routinely facilitated the provision of basic services and the maintenance of essential infrastructure in the buffer zone, such as roads, waterways and electricity supply. During the reporting period, UNFICYP authorized 28 civilian projects out of 32 applications received.

15. Civilian activities and presence in the buffer zone reflect a sense of increased security as Cypriots try to pursue normal lives. At the same time, they often cause incidents, including passive resistance and occasional belligerence, contesting, and often disregarding, UNFICYP procedures. In such cases, the support and cooperation of the local authorities with UNFICYP is critical, and the mission has urged the relevant authorities on both sides to provide their fullest support, including in prompt addressing by the courts of new and long-standing cases of assault on UNFICYP personnel and damage to United Nations property.

16. UNFICYP also continued to address the day-to-day issues related to the Greek Cypriots and Maronites residing in the north and Turkish Cypriots residing in the south. UNFICYP continued to deliver, on a weekly basis, humanitarian assistance to 351 Greek Cypriots and 126 Maronites in the north, and to help meet their health-care needs. The mission has encouraged both communities to develop a long-term care plan for this ageing population, including the provision of Greek-speaking doctors. UNFICYP also continued to facilitate the delivery of school textbooks and the appointment of teachers for the Greek Cypriot schools in Karpas peninsula. During the reporting period, the Turkish Cypriot authorities continued to review the requests for permanent residence submitted, through UNFICYP, by nine Maronite families and two Greek Cypriots.

17. In the south, UNFICYP continued to assist local authorities and community representatives in their efforts to provide welfare services, including housing, social support and medical care for the Turkish Cypriots in need. The mission also monitored and liaised with local educational authorities in order to meet the needs of Turkish Cypriots residing in the Limassol-Paphos area. There have been no new developments regarding the establishment of a Turkish-language primary school in Limassol.

18. UNFICYP also assisted in addressing the legal and humanitarian issues in connection with the imprisonment of nine Turkish Cypriots in the south and six Greek Cypriots in the north and temporary arrests of individuals on both sides. The mission conducted visits to detention facilities to ascertain the conditions and welfare of the individuals serving sentences in the other community. It also facilitated visits by family members and access to legal representation and interpretation. UNFICYP was also present during court hearings to ensure confidence in the judicial proceedings in the other community.

19. During the reporting period, UNFICYP facilitated 20 religious and commemorative events, involving some 6,000 individuals, which were held in or required crossing of the buffer zone. UNFICYP assisted in defusing the tensions which arose during the annual Turkish Cypriot pilgrimage to Hala Sultan Tekke in Larnaca in August. Owing to the lack of clear advance agreement on the procedures, only some of the Turkish Cypriots were able to cross the buffer zone. In protest, the Turkish Cypriots cancelled a follow-on visit to the same mosque. Conversely, the Greek Cypriots have protested at the lack of clarity and response from the Turkish Cypriot authorities to their requests for holding religious services in the north.

20. UNFICYP continued to support community initiatives that foster bi-communal cooperation and reconciliation. The mission facilitated more than 80 bi-communal events, with the participation of more than 3,000 people, in cooperation with international and local partners. The events were held at the Ledra Palace Hotel and other locations in the buffer zone and included regular meetings between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political party leaders and representatives under the auspices of the Embassy of Slovakia, sporting events for youth from the two communities, and joint projects to repair and upgrade essential infrastructure in the buffer zone.

21. In addition, UNFICYP facilitated a variety of bi-communal projects implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and its local partners by allowing access to certain areas in the buffer zone. UNFICYP is continuing to support a European Union-funded project implemented by the two

Nicosia municipalities for the stabilization of the buildings at the Ledra Street/Lokmaçı crossing. On the occasion of the International Day of Peace, UNDP organized a public viewing in the buffer zone of a short film, *The 9 o'clock News in 2030*. Produced by the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce, with funding from the United States Agency for International Development, the film presented the business case for a settlement to the Cyprus problem.

22. UNFICYP continued its efforts to improve confidence between the two communities in Pyla, the only mixed village in the buffer zone. It facilitated regular meetings between local community representatives on issues of concern. Building on previous cooperation, the Turkish Cypriot community of Louroujina village and the Greek Cypriot community of Athienou launched an initiative to restore a medieval chapel in the buffer zone. UNFICYP will continue to support such initiatives aimed at promoting a shared Cypriot cultural heritage.

23. UNFICYP police continued to maintain and foster working relationships with their counterparts on both sides, including the assistance with and facilitation of a number of investigations by the respective police services. During the reporting period, there have been 11 reported cases of theft in the buffer zone, one case of threatening behaviour towards UNFICYP personnel, and three cases of criminal damage or vandalism.

24. Daily communication has helped to further enhance cooperation and to address operational difficulties within the buffer zone. The Joint Communications Room, where UNFICYP police have a permanent presence, has continued to function, complementing the existing police liaison between the sides. The two sides have demonstrated a willingness to cooperate and assist each other by exchanging information on cases involving abduction, apprehended persons, illegal drugs and stolen property.

25. The bi-communal Technical Committee on Crime and Criminal Matters met four times during the reporting period under the facilitation of UNFICYP police. The sides agreed on a joint working plan for 2012, which includes joint seminars on domestic violence, drug abuse and traffic safety, as well as a bi-communal concert to increase awareness, especially among the youth, of the dangers posed by drug and alcohol abuse.

26. Despite the limited number of personnel, UNFICYP police continued to ensure escort for the regular convoys of Turkish Cypriot civilians and humanitarian supplies through the buffer zone to Kokkina/Erenköy, as part of the agreement reached between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders in October 2010.

27. UNFICYP also facilitated three meetings of the Committee on Crossings over the reporting period. While the meetings were held in a positive atmosphere, the parties have maintained their positions, and have not been able to reach agreement on new crossing points. The mission has facilitated site visits and engaged with the sides with a view to encouraging the search for mutually acceptable solutions.

28. During the period from 7 May to 22 October 2011, UNFICYP recorded almost 795,000 official crossings through the buffer zone. During the period from May to November 2011, goods worth approximately €871,579.00 crossed from the south to the north. The value of goods moving in the opposite direction rose sharply, to

approximately €20,874,875.44, owing to the provision of electricity to help cover shortfalls in the south.

29. Restrictions on United Nations staff members of Greek Cypriot origin seeking to undertake their duties in the north have remained.

IV. Committee on Missing Persons

30. During the reporting period, the Committee on Missing Persons continued to carry out its bi-communal project on the exhumation, identification and return of remains of missing persons. As at November 2011, the Committee's bi-communal teams of archaeologists have exhumed the remains of more than 800 individuals on both sides of the island, including some 20 during the reporting period. The remains of nearly 500 persons have undergone examination at the Committee's anthropological laboratory in the United Nations Protected Area in Nicosia. Following genetic analysis of 1,450 samples by a bi-communal team of scientists at the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics, the remains of over 300 individuals have been returned to their respective families, including 28 during the reporting period. The Committee's access to military areas in the north has remained circumscribed.

V. Financial and administrative aspects

31. The General Assembly, by its resolution 65/295, appropriated the amount of $56.5 million gross for the maintenance of UNFICYP for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012, inclusive of the voluntary contribution of one third of the net cost of the Force, equivalent to $18.0 million, from the Government of Cyprus and the voluntary contribution of $6.5 million from the Government of Greece. I invite other countries and organizations also to make voluntary contributions, with a view to reducing the portion of the cost of UNFICYP covered by assessed contributions.

32. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period of six months, as recommended in paragraph 42 below, the cost of maintaining the Force would be limited to the amount approved by the General Assembly.

33. As at 10 November 2011, the total outstanding assessed contributions to the special account for UNFICYP for the period from 16 June 1993 to 10 November 2011 amounted to $22.1 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date amounted to $3,787.7 million.

34. Reimbursement of troop and contingent-owned equipment costs has been made only for the periods up to 31 March 2011 and 30 June 2010, respectively, owing to the delay in the receipt of assessed contributions.

VI. Observations

35. The decrease in the overall number of military violations and the cancellation, for the fourth consecutive time, of the annual exercises on both sides are welcome developments. In view of the recent maritime tensions around Cyprus, it is

important that the military status quo in the buffer zone is preserved. At the same time, the opposing forces should respond positively to the UNFICYP proposals on military confidence-building measures. It is also essential that the authority of UNFICYP in the buffer zone is respected by the local population and local authorities. Civilian activities in the buffer zone can contribute to the reconciliation process, if they are managed in a manner that fosters trust and cooperation. I therefore call on the respective authorities to provide their fullest support to UNFICYP in implementing its mandate.

36. Restrictions on the movement of locally employed United Nations personnel regrettably continue. Freedom of movement for all United Nations personnel is a matter of principle for the Organization and an operational requirement for UNFICYP. I call on the Turkish Cypriot authorities to respect that principle.

37. Both communities have continued to rely on UNFICYP assistance in addressing various issues affecting the everyday lives of the two communities. Civil society initiatives are vital for long-term reconciliation and communal harmony and merit the fullest support of the leadership of the two communities. UNFICYP has been instrumental in facilitating cooperation between the sides on criminal matters and I welcome the continuing cooperation between the sides in this area.

38. I remain of the view that the establishment of economic, social, cultural, sporting or similar ties and contacts will have a positive impact on the ongoing negotiations. Such contacts nurture a sentiment of trust between the communities and help to address the concerns of isolation expressed by the Turkish Cypriots. Further, greater economic and social parity between the sides will make an eventual reunification not only easier but also more likely. In the context of an internationally sanctioned peace process, efforts in the opposite direction can only be counterproductive.

39. I am pleased that the humanitarian work of the Committee on Missing Persons continues largely unhindered. I appeal to all parties to continue efforts to prevent the work of the Committee from being politicized. I once again urge all parties to be more accommodating in meeting the Committee's exhumation requirements throughout the island, including in areas in the north controlled by the military.

40. While there has been no demining activity during the reporting period, mined areas, both in and outside the buffer zone, remain on the island. I call upon the parties to facilitate, without delay, access to the remaining mined areas in and outside the buffer zone, in line with Security Council resolution 1986 (2011). The United Nations stands ready to assist the parties in their aspiration to achieve a mine-free Cyprus.

41. I also encourage the parties to continue efforts to achieve further progress with regard to crossings. The seven crossings established to date have greatly facilitated the movement of people between the two sides, making a tangible difference to the everyday lives of many Cypriots across the island. Progress on this front will help to improve the overall confidence between the communities. I urge the parties to seek, through pragmatic and results-oriented discussions, mutually beneficial agreements and increased social and economic interaction between the two communities.

42. UNFICYP continues to play an important role on the island in maintaining the calm and fostering bi-communal relations and trust. The mission maintains close collaboration with my mission of good offices, led by my Special Adviser, and other

United Nations actors on the island. I therefore recommend that the mandate of UNFICYP be extended for a period of six months, until 15 June 2012.

43. In line with Security Council resolutions, most recently resolution 1986 (2011), the Secretariat will remain engaged in contingency planning in relation to the settlement. The planning will continue to be guided by developments in the negotiations and the views of the parties on the possible role of the United Nations in this respect.

44. At the same time, I shall continually keep the operations of UNFICYP under close review, taking into account developments on the ground and the views of the parties, and shall revert to the Council with recommendations, as appropriate, for further adjustments to the UNFICYP mandate, force levels and concept of operations as soon as warranted. As I informed the Council in my report dated 8 August 2011 (S/2011/498) regarding the broader assessment of the United Nations presence in Cyprus, internal discussions continue as to the potential scope and timing of such an exercise.

45. In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to my Special Representative and Chief of Mission, Lisa M. Buttenheim, to the Force Commander, Major General Chao Liu, and to the men and women serving in UNFICYP for the efficiency and commitment with which they have discharged the responsibilities entrusted to them by the Security Council.

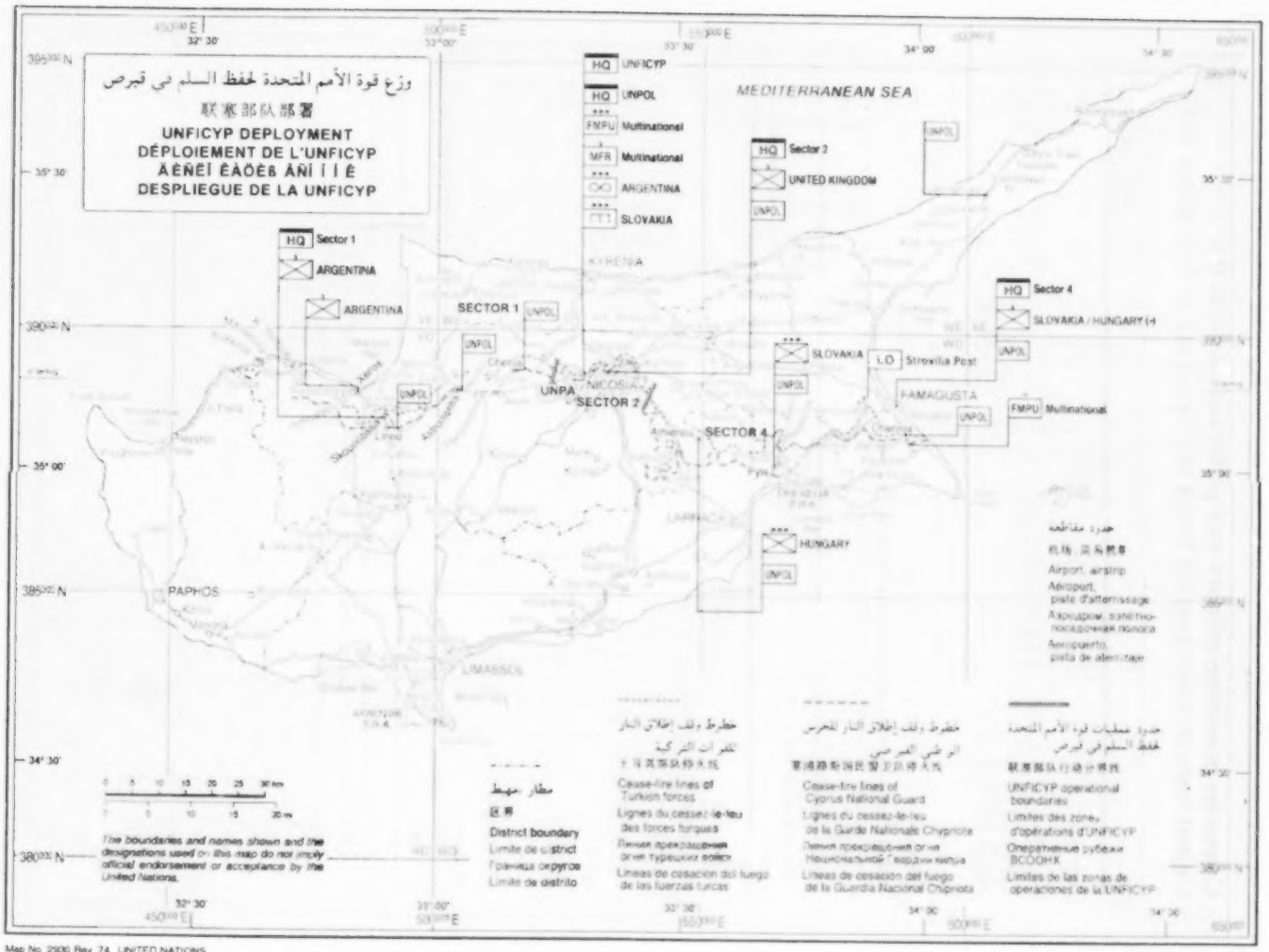
Annex

Countries providing military and police personnel to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (as at 31 October 2011)

Country	*Military personnel*
Argentina[a]	265
Austria	4
Canada	1
China[b]	2
Hungary	77
Slovakia[c]	159
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	271
Total	**856**

Country	*United Nations police*
Australia	14
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8
Croatia	4
El Salvador	3
India	6
Ireland	18
Italy	4
Montenegro	3
Ukraine	6
Total	**66**

[a] The Argentinean contingent includes soldiers from Brazil (1), Chile (15) and Paraguay (14).
[b] China is using one vacant Canadian and one British post at UNFICYP headquarters.
[c] The Slovakian contingent includes soldiers from Croatia (2) and Serbia (45).



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